

## Assess the knowledge of assertive behavioral response on sexual abuse among adolescent girls in selected high school, Bhubaneswar

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### Abstract

**Background:** Sexual abuse has a significant impact on essential areas of girl children emotional, moral, physical, and social development throughout their lives, jeopardizing their lives. As a result, it is crucial for girls to be assertive in standing against the abuse.

**Aim:** The study is planned to measure the level of knowledge of assertive behavioral response on sexual abuse among adolescent girls in selected high school, Bhubaneswar, Odisha and to associate the knowledge of assertive behavioral response on sexual abuse among adolescent girls in selected high school, Bhubaneswar, Odisha with their socio demographic variables.

**Methods and Material:** A descriptive study was conducted by taking 200 adolescent girls belonging to 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> standards were selected conveniently from govt. high school. A self-structured questionnaire consists of socio demographic information like parents education and working hours, distance between school and house, means of transport, leisure time activities, residence, mass media available in home, previous exposure to awareness programme on prevention and management regarding sexual abuse. Their knowledge regarding sexual abuse was measured through self-structured knowledge questionnaire which was interpreted on the basis of poor, average and good knowledge.

**Result:** Using descriptive and inferential statistics, the data were analyzed and interpreted in accordance with the objectives. Among 200 adolescent girls 80.5% had average Knowledge, 19.5% of them had good knowledge and none of them had poor knowledge. The chi-square value of age with knowledge is 10.602 with DF = 3 at p value .014 which is statistically significant As the p-value (.014) are less than 0.05, thus a significant association found between the socio demographic variables and the knowledge of assertive behavioral response on sexual abuse at 5% level.

**Conclusion:** Sexual abuse is a major cause of psychological and emotional problems in adolescent girls, which some may never be able to overcome. Therefore different policies and programmes should be developed by the government agency for implementation of sexual health educational programmes for adolescents girls in school education curriculum.

**Keywords:** Assertive behavior, sexual health knowledge, adolescent girls, sexual abuse, school curriculum.

### Introduction

Worldwide the adolescence has been accepted as a significant developmental milestone and a vital phase that impacts their emotional, behavioral, physical health and social developmental state, resulting in catastrophic consequences. So as to prevent abuse during this crucial phase the adolescent must be alert about Sex and Sexuality. As a consequences adequate and right knowledge on Sexual abuse should be a basic right of every child [1].

Information collected from POSCO Act, the number of registered cases for child abuse in India is raising from day by day [3, 4]. Globally the prevalence of sexual abuse especially child sexual abuse is more in female that is about 20% and for males it is about 8%. Most of the sexual abuse offenders are familiar with the victims, around 30% are victims' relatives, may be their cousins brothers, uncles, nearly about 60% are like may be friends of the family and

neighbors; approximately 10% offenders are strangers. Men are the primary perpetrators of child sexual abuse [5].

Child sexual abuse, often known as child molestation, is a type of kid abuse in which an adult or older adolescent sexually stimulates a child. Petting, fondling of genitalia, breasts, or anus, voyeurism, pornography, exhibitionism, pushing a kid to engage in sexual activities, indecent exposure of the genitals, nipples, and other forms of sexual abuse against teenagers are all examples of sexual abuse against adolescents [6, 7].

Assertiveness is a strategy for showing self-assurance and a proper way of stating "yes" or "no." An individual's capacity to honestly express both positive and negative feelings and thoughts is referred to as assertive behavior. In an interpersonal environment, assertive behavior is the ability to seek, sustain, or enhance reinforcement. Individual assertion differs from person to person [8, 9].

This study was intended to find out the adolescents girls right knowledge on sexual abuse and also to understand how they would respond to sexual abuse situations. Knowledge and safeguarding adolescents from sexual abuse situations is essential. Keeping in mind the consequences of sexual abuse it is necessary for adolescent girls to learn adequate life skills and assertiveness behavioral responses to face sexual abuse situations on their life.

**Methods and Material**

A study was conducted by using Quantitative research approach & non-experimental descriptive research design. A total of 200 adolescent girls were selected as samples by using non probability convenient sample technique. The research study was conducted at Baramunda, govt. High School, Bhubaneswar, Khurdha and Odisha. The data was collected by two section. Section - A: Demographic variables, Section - B: A self-structured knowledge questionnaire to assess knowledge on child sexual abuse among adolescent girls. The research variable was the knowledge among adolescent girls regarding sexual abuse & the Demographic variable were; age in years, class of study, type of family, father education, mother education, parents working hours, distance between school and house, mass media available in home, number of family member, living with, monthly income etc.

**Ethical Consideration:** An official sanction was taken from the institutional review board & the participants were informed about their right that they can withdraw from the resrarch study at any time throughout the study.

**Instruments:** The investigator constructed the demographic information and self-structured questionnaire based on a research of the literature, discussions with five experts & personal experience. The tool consists of two sections; Section- A consists of demographic Variables & Section-B consists of self-structure knowledge questionnaire which contain 24 questions which will help to evaluate the knowledge of adolescent girls regarding sexual abuse.

**Scoring Key:** Each question contains 4 options, for each right answer scored 1 & for each wrong answer scored 0 was given.

**Scoring Interpretation:** Poor knowledge 1-8 (1-33) %  
Average knowledge 9-16 (34-67) %.  
Good knowledge 17-24 (68-100) %

**Method of Data Collection**

The formal permission was taken from the head of the authority of Baramunda govt. High School, Bhubaneswar. The objectives and method for collecting the data was first explained by the researcher to the school children & then the verbal concern was taken from the participants. The samples were selected by using the non-probability convenient sample technique. A total number of 200 adolescent girls were selected, who met the inclusion criteria. The exclusion criteria was the adolescent girls who have been exposed to any research study on assertive behavior in the prevention of sexual abuse and who are psychologically and physically unwell at the time of data collection. The researcher given a self-introduction, explained the study purpose and reassured the respondent that the collected data will be kept confidential and it will be only used for research purpose. Consent was taken from the participant and reassure regarding the maintenance of confidentiality. The knowledge of sexual abuse was assessed by a self-structured knowledge questionnaire. The tool was validated by various experts. The content validity index was 0.97. The tool was tested with 20 participants to check the reliability. The calculated correlation coefficient chronbach alpha value was 0.86. The investigator collected the information by using two tools; Tool – A demographic variables and tool-B self-structured knowledge questionnaire tool, and the responses were marked simultaneously by using interviewing method & it took around 10-12 minutes to obtain the data from each participant. At the end of the data collection the researcher given thanks to each participants for their fullest cooperation.

**Statistical analysis**

The collected data was scored & tabulated. Statistical analysis was conducted by using (SPSS)-20. Descriptive & Inferential statistics were used for demographic variables and Chi-square test for the association of demographic variables with level of knowledge of assertive behavioral response on sexual abuse among adolescent girls.

**Results**

**Table 1:** Demographic variables of adolescent girls

N=200

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Age in year</b>		
<13	75	37.5
13-14	55	27.5
14-15	59	29.5
>15	11	5.5
Total	200	100
<b>Class of study</b>		
7th	75	37.5
8th	56	28
9th	68	34
10th	1	0.5

<b>Living with</b>		
Father	6	3
Mother	28	14
Both	128	64
Others	38	19
<b>Relationship with neighbors are</b>		
Good & cooperative	103	51.5
Average relationship	74	37
Bad & uncooperative	23	11.5
<b>Type of family</b>		
Nuclear	75	37.5
Joint	104	52
Extended	21	10.5
<b>No of family members</b>		
2	47	23.5
3	70	35
>3	83	41.5
<b>Father education</b>		
Illiterate	65	32.5
Under graduate	40	20
Graduate	84	42
Post graduate	11	5.5
<b>Mother education</b>		
Illiterate	64	32
Under graduate	44	22
Graduate	77	38.5
Post graduate	15	7.5
Variables	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Working hour of parents</b>		
6-8 hour	154	77
>8hour	46	23
<b>Family income/month</b>		
5000-10000	103	51.5
10000-20000	97	48.5
<b>Distance between school&amp; house</b>		
<2km	150	75
>2km	50	25
<b>Media available at home</b>		
Tv	142	71
Computer	10	5
Both	48	24

The study found 37% of adolescent girls from <13 years of age group 27% were 13-14 years of age, 30% were 14-15 years of age and only 6% were >15 years of age. In class of study 37.5%, 28%, 34% were from 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> class respectively and very few (0.5%) were from 10<sup>th</sup> class of study. Maximum 64% adolescent girls were living with their parents, out of which 14% with their mothers & very few (3%) were with father whereas 19% adolescent girls were living with others. More than half (51.5%) adolescent girls had good & cooperative relationship with their neighbors, 37% had average relationship whereas only 11.5% had bad & uncooperative relationship with neighbors. More than half (52%) had nuclear family, 37.5% had nuclear family & few (10.5%) had extended family. Nearly about half (41.5%) of them had >3 no. of family members, 35% had 3 members on their family and about 23.5% had 2 family members on their home. Nearly about half (42%) of adolescent girls father had educate up to graduate, 32.5% fathers had illiterate, 20% fathers were under graduate and very few (5.5%) fathers were post graduate. More than one third (38.5%) mothers were graduate, 22% were under graduate, 32% mothers were illiterate and very few (7.5%)

mothers were post graduate. Maximum 77% parents have working hour more than 8 hours, nearly about one third (23%) of parent had working hour was about 6-8 hours. More than half (51.5%) had family income per month was Rs.5000-10000 and 48.5% had monthly family income was Rs.10000-20000. Maximum 75% adolescent girls had distance between school & house was less than 2 km whereas 25% had more than 2km distance between school & house. Regarding media available at home maximum 71% were having TV, a few (5%) had computer at home whereas 24% were having both.

**Table 2:** Level of knowledge of assertive behavioral response on sexual abuse among adolescent girls

N=200		
Level of knowledge	Frequency	Percentage
Poor knowledge	Nil	Nil
Average knowledge	161	80.5
Good knowledge	39	19.5

The study found that 80.5% adolescent girls had average knowledge, 19.5% of them good knowledge & none of them

had poor knowledge.

**Table 3:** Association of level of knowledge of assertive behavioral response on sexual abuse among adolescent girls with their demographic Variables

N=200

Demographic variables	Chi-square value	DF	p-value
<b>Age</b>			
<13 years	10.602	3	.014 *
13-14 years			
14-15 years			
>15 years			
<b>Class of study</b>			
7 <sup>th</sup>	.602	3	.896
8 <sup>th</sup>			
9 <sup>th</sup>			
10 <sup>th</sup>			
<b>Live with</b>			
Father	.702	3	.873
Mother			
Both			
Others			
<b>Relationship with neighbors are</b>			
Good & cooperative	2.499	3	.476
Average			
Bad & uncooperative			
<b>Demographic variables</b>	<b>Chi-square value</b>	<b>DF</b>	<b>p value</b>
<b>Type of family</b>			
Necluer	4.356	2	.113
Joint			
Extend			
<b>No of family members</b>			
2	2.080	2	.353
3			
>3			
<b>Father education</b>			
Illiterate	1.088	3	.780
Graduate			
Under graduate			
Post graduate			
<b>Mother education</b>			
Illiterate	5.074	3	.166
Graduate			
Under graduate			
Post graduate			
<b>Working hour of parents</b>			
6-8 hour	.427	1	.513
>8 hour			
<b>Family income/month</b>			
5000-10000	1.022	1	.312
10000-20000			
<b>Distance between school &amp; house</b>			
<2km	.256	1	.613
>2km			
<b>Media available at home</b>			
TV	.005	2	.997
Computer			
Both			

\*Significant at 5% level

The chi-square value of age with knowledge is 10.602 with DF = 3 at p value .014 which is statistically significant. As the p-value (.014) is less than 0.05, thus a significant association is found between the socio-demographic variables & the knowledge of assertive behavioral response on sexual abuse at 5% level only with age.

**Discussion**

The present study revealed that 80.5% adolescent girls had average knowledge, 19.5% of them good knowledge & none of them had poor knowledge. Incongruence with our study result, G Sangeetha Jagdish, Abirami P, Jayabharathi B, Deena Jothy, Bhuvanawari also reported that 90.6% school children had moderately adequate knowledge, 9.4% had adequate knowledge and none of them had adequate

knowledge on child sexual abuse<sup>[10, 11]</sup>. A related study on adolescent knowledge on sexual abuse conducted by AlQuaiz *et al.* revealed that adolescent school students had quite appropriate sexual health knowledge<sup>[12]</sup>.

In this study it was also observed that maximum 64 % adolescent girls were living with their parents, Nearly about half (42%) of adolescent girls father had educate up to graduate and more than one third (38.5%) mothers were graduate, 22% were under graduate, 32% mother were illiterate. Maximum 64 % adolescent girls were living with their parents. Maximum 75% adolescent girls had distance between school & house was less than 2 km, Results of our study prop up the findings of Price MN, Hyde JS which have identified living parent, parent's education, no of family members at home are the essential features for adolescent sexual health knowledge<sup>[13]</sup>.

Therefore, it is very much crucial to educate, aware, teach and also engage their guardian especially parents starting from infancy to adulthood for gaining knowledge on adolescents sexual health<sup>[14, 15]</sup>.

The present study reveals that the chi-square value of age with knowledge is 10.602 with DF = 3 at p value .014 which is statistically significant As the p-value (.014) are less than 0.05, thus a significant association found between the socio demographic variables & the knowledge of assertive behavioral response on sexual abuse at 5% level only with age. Knowledge on Sexual abuse as well as assertive behavioral response skill are very important for adolescents. A study conducted by Prasad Vimala revealed that training programme on assertiveness skill can prevent abuses in adolescents as it increases their courage and awareness towards their right against sexual abuse<sup>[16]</sup>.

### Conclusion

Sexual abuse is a severe and extensive problem now a day's not only in India but also in others parts of the world. The girls in their adolescent period suffered from various health related problems including cognitive, social, emotional and behavioral problems which in turn affected their day to day activities as well as their quality of life and living skills. For their safety, security, proper development and healthy life there must be different policy and programme to fulfill their basic needs and rights. For this there must be different assertiveness training programme, mass media public educational programme, new research should be done regarding sex and sexual health to avoid sexual abuse. Hence this can be recommended for this group to optimize their health with regular training & practice and lessen the burden on herself and to her family.

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